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ABSTRACT

A profile is provided of students at Miami-Dade Community College (M-DCC) who enrolled in at least one college preparatory course in fall 1989. The report covers the number of academically prepared students; their ethnic distribution, age, gender, and native language; the year they graduated from high school; their enrollment and matriculation status; and the number of credits they earned. Comparing the academically underprepared students with students who took no college preparatory classes that term, the report highlights the following: (1) one in five fall 1989 students enrolled in at least one college preparatory course during the term; (2) of these students, 18% were White non-Hispanic, 21% were Black non-Hispanic, and 59% were Hispanic; while among students not enrolled in college preparatory classes, 29% were White non-Hispanic, 15% were Black non-Hispanic, and 54% were Hispanic; (3) of those students enrolled in a college preparatory course, 51% had a native language other than English, as did 44% of those not enrolled in a college preparatory course; (4) 37% of the academically underprepared students had graduated from high school the previous year, compared to 11% of those enrolled in college-level courses only; (5) of those students enrolled in a college preparatory course, one third were under 20 years of age and another third were between 20 and 24 years of age; and (6) about the same number of new students (N=4,524) and continuing students (N=4,396) were enrolled in college preparatory course work.

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PROFILE OF THE ACADEMICALLY UNDERPREPARED STUDENT AT MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Research Report No. 90-13R

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Institutional Research

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OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

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Profile of the Academically Underprepared Student
At Miami-Dade Community College

Introduction

One of the primary missions of Miami-Dade Community College (M-DCC) is to provide educational opportunity for academically underprepared students. As stated by Watters in M-DCC's Mission Study No. 6: Salvaging Human Resources,

> Mission: American community colleges should continue to salvage individuals from the abyss of interrupted or inadequate education, help them discover their potential, and fulfill that potential by securing essential academic skills. These Americans should be enabled to contribute to the maintenance of a healthy and vigorous national economy and participate as literate and informed citizens in the internal processes of a strong and growing democracy (p.1).

In keeping with this mission, the Office of Institutional Research at M-DCC has over the last several years investigated the characteristics of the academically underprepared student, and has conducted research into the efficacy of the college programs designed to serve these students. Many of these studies were annotated by Einspruch (1989) in an Annotated Bibliography of Selected Research Reports Related to Academically Underprepared and English as a Second Language (ESL) Students at Miami-Dade Community College. It is clear from this report that M-DCC commits a great deal of effort to fulfilling the mission stated above.

The purpose of the present Research Report is to provide a description of students enrolled at M-DCC during Fall Term 1989 who enrolled in at least one college preparatory course that term. The profile of these students is presented in comparison to students who did not enroll in a college preparatory course that term. The report addresses the following questions:

-How many students took at least one college preparatory course during the Fall Term 1989?

-What was their ethnic distribution?

-How old were they?

-What was their gender?

-What was their native language?

-When did they graduate from high school, and from what type of high school did they come?

-What was their enrollment and matriculation status?

-How many credits had they earned?

This profile is different from others produced by Institutional Research in that it considers all credit students enrolled in a Fall Term, rather than any particular subset of students (e.g., first-time-in-college students).

Method

Demographic information for all Fall Term 1989 credit students enrolled at M-DCC was obtained from the demographic research file (IRS40). Course information was obtained from the Student Course Record (SCR). If a student took any course having a number with a leading zero during Fall 1989, that student was considered to have taken at least one college preparatory course that term. All other students were said not to have taken a college preparatory course that term. It is likely, of course, that many of these latter students had enrolled in a college preparatory course during some earlier term. Tables were generated using the information obtained from these files.

Highlights

°One in five students enrolled during Fall Term 1989 enrolled in at least one college preparatory course during the term. Of these students, 18% were White non-Hispanic, 21% were Black non-Hispanic, and 59% were Hispanic. Of the students who were not enrolled in a college preparatory course, 29% were White non-Hispanic, 15% were Black non-Hispanic, and 54% were Hispanic.

°Of those students who enrolled in a college preparatory course, 51% had a native language other than English. Of those students who were not enrolled

in a college preparatory course, 44% had a native language other than English.

°As may be expected, the majority of students enrolled in a college preparatory course were new freshmen or continuing students. In contrast, most of the students not enrolled in a college preparatory course were continuing students.

°Of those enrolled in a college preparatory course, 37% had graduated from high school during the previous year. Of those who were not enrolled in a college preparatory course, 11% had graduated from high school during the previous year.

Results

Table 1 shows the distributions by self-reported ethnic group. College-wide, of those who was enrolled in a college preparatory course, 18% were White non-Hispanic, 21% were Black non-Hispanic, and 59% were Hispanic. This compared to 29%, 15%, and 54%, respectively for students who were not enrolled in college preparatory coursework. A greater fraction of those enrolled in a college preparatory course on North Campus (44%) and on Medical Center Campus (53%) were Black non-Hispanic. On Wolfson Campus this group was predominantly Hispanic (78%). In addition, one may see from the bottom line of this table that one of every five students enrolled this term took at least one college preparatory class.

Table 2 shows the distribution by self-reported native language. College-wide, the group who was enrolled in college preparatory courses comprised a slightly smaller percentage of students who spoke English as a native language (49% vs. 56%). This pattern was seen on all campuses, although it was most evident on Wolfson Campus (26% vs. 38%). This is also the campus with the greatest percentage of students whose native language is not English.

Table 3 shows the gender distribution within each group. Although more females were enrolled than males, the distribution within the two groups was similar (college-wide there were about 60% females, 40% males). Medical Center Campus was the only one that did not follow the college-wide pattern. On this campus 81% of those who were enrolled in college

preparatory coursework were female, compared to 72% of those who were not enrolled in these courses.

Table 4 shows the distribution by age. Considerable difference between the two groups was seen on this variable. Of those students who were enrolled in a college preparatory course, one-third were under 20 years of age, and another one-third were 20 - 24 years of age. In contrast, of those who were not enrolled in a college preparatory course, 18% were under twenty years of age, and 40% were 20 - 24 years of age. This pattern was approximated on North and South Campuses. Wolfson Campus had a more even spread over the age groups in both groups. Medical Center Campus had a large proportion of older students, with 35% of those currently enrolled in college preparatory courses in the over 30 group and 50% of those not currently enrolled in college preparatory courses in this same group.

Table 5 shows the distribution of the two groups across enrollment codes. College-wide and on each campus the majority of students who were taking college preparatory courses were either new freshmen or continuing students. Interestingly, about the same number of new students (N=4,525) and continuing students (N=4,396) were enrolled in college preparatory coursework. In contrast, the bulk of students who were not taking college preparatory coursework were in the continuing student category.

Table 6 shows the distribution across matriculation status codes. A slightly higher percentage of students who were taking college preparatory courses were in Associate in Arts (A.A.) or Associate in Science (A.S.) degree programs, while a slightly higher percentage of students who were not taking college preparatory courses were in the upgrade skills, personal interest, or transfer categories.

Table 7 shows the distributions by high school of origin. College-wide and on North and South Campuses the two distributions were similar, with about half of the students having come from Dade County public high schools. On Wolfson Campus, students who were taking college preparatory courses were more likely to have come from a foreign high school (37% vs. 27%). On Medical Center Campus, students in the college preparatory

group were more likely to have come from Dade County public high schools (50% vs. 40%).

Table 8 compares the distributions by date of high school graduation. College-wide, 37% of those who were taking a college preparatory course had graduated within the last year, while only 11% of those who were not taking college preparatory course had graduated within the last year. This pattern was seen on each campus.

Table 9 shows the distribution of the number of credits earned. Clearly, students who were enrolled in college preparatory classes had earned fewer credits than those who were not taking these courses. While 80% of the former group had earned less than 30 credits, this figure was only 43% for the latter group. Only 7% of the former group had earned over 60 credits, compared to 27% of the latter group. Again, this pattern was seen on each campus.

Conclusion

The findings in this profile suggest that the majority of M-DCC students, especially Black non-Hispanics and Hispanics, begin their matriculation in need of college preparatory coursework. In fact, of the 49,143 students enrolled during the Fall Term 1989, 21% were taking at least one college preparatory course. When compared to those students who did not take a college preparatory course this term, these students were younger, had graduated from high school more recently, were earlier in their matriculation, had earned fewer credits, and were more likely to be degree seeking. A somewhat greater proportion of these students did not speak English as a native language.

Table 1

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
White Non-Hispanic	385	13	2,663	24
Black Non-Hispanic	1,225	41	3,282	30
Hispanic	1,310	44	4,794	44
Other	60	2	277	2
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
White Non-Hispanic	1,179	27	6,040	35
Black Non-Hispanic	386	9	1,037	6
Hispanic	2,662	61	9,598	56
Other	107	3	484	3
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
White Non-Hispanic	208	8	1,425	18
Black Non-Hispanic	315	13	873	11
Hispanic	1,929	78	5,421	70
Other	15	1	86	1
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
White Non-Hispanic	56	13	976	33
Black Non-Hispanic	231	53	776	26
Hispanic	133	31	1,111	38
Other	12	3	87	3
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
White Non-Hispanic	1,828	18	11,104	29
Black Non-Hispanic	2,157	21	5,968	15
Hispanic	6,034	59	20,924	54
Other	194	2	934	2
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

Table 2

Fall 1989 Enrollees Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Native Language

Native Language	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
English	1,618	54	6,455	59
Spanish	1,047	35	3,527	32
Other	315	11	1,034	9
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
English	2,554	59	10,697	62
Spanish	1,640	38	5,798	34
Other	140	3	664	4
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
English	638	26	3,002	38
Spanish	1,622	66	4,234	54
Other	207	8	569	8
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
English	243	56	1,835	62
Spanish	101	23	849	29
Other	88	21	266	9
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
English	5,053	49	21,989	56
Spanish	4,410	43	14,408	37
Other	750	8	2,533	7
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

Table 3

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Gender

Gender	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
Male	1,217	41	5,055	46
Female	1,763	59	5,961	54
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
Male	1,872	43	7,751	45
Female	2,462	57	9,408	55
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
Male	937	38	3,064	39
Female	1,530	62	4,741	61
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
Male	84	19	825	28
Female	348	81	2,125	72
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
Male	4,110	40	16,695	43
Female	6,103	60	22,235	57
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

Table 4

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Age

Age	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
Under 20	980	33	1,703	16
20 - 24	1,029	35	4,416	40
25 - 29	394	13	1,983	18
Over 30	577	19	2,914	26
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
Under 20	1,700	39	3,759	22
20 - 24	1,505	35	7,930	46
25 - 29	496	11	2,542	15
Over 30	633	15	2,928	17
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
Under 20	471	19	1,174	15
20 - 24	701	28	2,514	32
25 - 29	481	20	1,594	21
Over 30	814	33	2,523	32
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
Under 20	100	23	146	5
20 - 24	115	27	715	24
25 - 29	67	15	613	21
Over 30	150	35	1,476	50
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
Under 20	3,251	32	6,782	18
20 - 24	3,350	33	15,575	40
25 - 29	1,438	14	6,732	17
Over 30	2,174	21	9,841	25
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

Table 5

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Enrollment Status

Enrollment Status	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
Early Admission	-	-	1	-
New Freshman	1,390	47	1,186	11
New Transfer	132	4	607	6
Continuing Student	1,263	42	7,912	72
Former Student	195	7	1,190	11
New High School Enrollee	-	-	59	-
Continuing High School Enrollee	-	-	59	-
Other High School Enrollee	-	-	2	-
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
Early Admission	-	-	3	-
New Freshman	2,028	47	2,125	13
New Transfer	195	4	872	5
Continuing Student	1,688	39	12,355	73
Former Student	419	10	1,498	9
New High School Enrollee	-	-	258	-
Continuing High School Enrollee	-	-	15	-
Other High School Enrollee	4	-	33	-
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
Early Admission	-	-	-	-
New Freshman	952	39	775	10
New Transfer	116	4	386	5
Continuing Student	1,249	51	5,457	70
Former Student	150	6	717	9
New High School Enrollee	-	-	157	2
Continuing High School Enrollee	-	-	261	3
Other High School Enrollee	-	-	52	1
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
Early Admission	-	-	-	-
New Freshman	155	36	262	9
New Transfer	31	7	258	9
Continuing Student	196	45	1,900	64
Former Student	50	12	530	18
New High School Enrollee	-	-	-	-
Continuing High School Enrollee	-	-	-	-
Other High School Enrollee	-	-	-	-
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
Early Admission	-	-	4	-
New Freshman	4,525	44	4,348	12
New Transfer	474	5	2,123	5
Continuing Student	4,396	43	27,624	72
Former Student	814	8	3,935	10
New High School Enrollee	-	-	474	1
Continuing High School Enrollee	-	-	335	-
Other High School Enrollee	4	-	87	-
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

Table 6

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Matriculation Status

Matriculation Status	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
Associate in Arts	2,085	70	6,511	59
Associate in Science	730	25	2,505	23
Associate in General Studies	11	-	21	-
Certificate	-	-	52	-
Upgrade Skills	77	3	872	8
Personal Interest	43	1	641	6
Transfer	34	1	414	4
Not Indicated	-	-	-	-
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
Associate in Arts	3,479	80	12,861	75
Associate in Science	431	11	1,557	9
Associate in General Studies	-	-	-	-
Certificate	-	-	1	-
Upgrade Skills	175	4	830	5
Personal Interest	146	3	722	4
Transfer	103	2	1,188	7
Not Indicated	-	-	-	-
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
Associate in Arts	1,515	62	4,296	55
Associate in Science	791	32	1,583	20
Associate in General Studies	-	-	-	-
Certificate	-	-	-	-
Upgrade Skills	99	4	947	12
Personal Interest	52	2	397	5
Transfer	9	-	582	8
Not Indicated	1	-	-	-
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
Associate in Arts	42	10	132	4
Associate in Science	377	87	2,016	68
Associate in General Studies	-	-		-
Certificate	3	1	32	1
Upgrade Skills	5	1	597	21
Personal Interest	-	-	67	2
Transfer	5	1	106	4
Not Indicated	-	-	-	-
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
Associate in Arts	7,121	71	23,800	61
Associate in Science	2,329	23	7,661	20
Associate in General Studies	11	-	21	-
Certificate	3	-	85	-
Upgrade Skills	356	3	3,246	8
Personal Interest	241	2	1,827	5
Transfer	151	1	2,290	6
Not Indicated	1	-	-	-
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

Table 7

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Matriculation Status

High School	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
Dade Public	1,663	56	5,557	50
Dade Private	128	4	730	7
Other Florida	121	4	592	5
Other U.S.	244	8	1,274	12
Foreign	516	17	1,790	16
High School Equivalent	302	10	1,050	10
Spanish GED	6	1	10	-
Unknown	-	-	13	-
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
Dade Public	2,303	54	8,670	51
Dade Private	394	9	2,198	13
Other Florida	137	3	582	3
Other U.S.	445	10	2,298	13
Foreign	517	12	2,243	13
High School Equivalent	527	12	1,143	7
Spanish GED	5	-	10	-
Unknown	6	-	15	-
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
Dade Public	781	32	2,577	33
Dade Private	122	5	640	8
Other Florida	59	2	520	7
Other U.S.	214	9	824	11
Foreign	901	37	2,117	27
High School Equivalent	325	13	874	11
Spanish GED	45	2	78	1
Unknown	20	-	175	2
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
Dade Public	216	50	1,177	40
Dade Private	16	4	160	5
Other Florida	16	4	175	6
Other U.S.	55	12	539	18
Foreign	63	15	539	18
High School Equivalent	64	15	329	12
Spanish GED	1	-	-	-
Unknown	1	-	31	1
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
Dade Public	4,963	49	17,981	46
Dade Private	660	6	3,728	10
Other Florida	333	3	1,869	5
Other U.S.	958	9	4,935	13
Foreign	1,997	20	6,689	17
High School Equivalent	1,218	12	3,396	9
Spanish GED	57	1	98	-
Unknown	27	-	234	-
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

Table 8

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and High School Graduation*

High School Graduation	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
Graduated 6/88 - 8/89	1,056	36	962	9
Graduated Before 6/88	1,859	64	9,703	91
Total	2,915	100	10,665	100
South Campus				
Graduated 6/88 - 8/89	1,886	44	2,378	14
Graduated Before 6/88	2,389	56	14,337	86
Total	4,275	100	16,715	100
Wolfson Campus				
Graduated 6/88 - 8/89	614	28	552	8
Graduated Before 6/88	1,608	72	6,355	92
Total	2,222	100	6,907	100
Medical Center Campus				
Graduated 6/88 - 8/89	130	31	109	4
Graduated Before 6/88	288	69	2,705	96
Total	418	100	2,814	100
College-Wide				
Graduated 6/88 - 8/89	3,686	37	4,001	11
Graduated Before 6/88	6,144	63	33,100	89
Total**	9,830	100	37,101	100

*Number of recent high school graduates may differ from that cited in other Research Reports if they do not have a similar time window.

**The high school graduation date was not known for all students.

Table 9

Fall 1989 Enrollees Who Were and Were Not Enrolled in College Preparatory Courses by Campus and Credits Earned

Credits Earned	Currently in College Preparatory		Not Currently in College Preparatory	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Campus				
0 - 14	1,762	59	2,625	24
15 - 29	588	20	2,036	18
30 - 44	261	9	1,901	17
45 - 59	164	6	1,420	13
Over 60	205	6	3,034	28
Total	2,980	100	11,016	100
South Campus				
0 - 14	2,785	64	4,508	26
15 - 29	864	20	3,025	17
30 - 44	333	8	3,046	18
45 - 59	168	4	2,506	15
Over 60	184	4	4,074	24
Total	4,334	100	17,159	100
Wolfson Campus				
0 - 14	1,396	56	2,300	29
15 - 29	463	19	1,320	17
30 - 44	225	9	1,252	16
45 - 59	121	5	932	12
Over 60	262	11	2,001	26
Total	2,467	100	7,805	100
Medical Center Campus				
0 - 14	228	53	843	29
15 - 29	85	20	292	10
30 - 44	41	9	327	11
45 - 59	19	4	253	9
Over 60	59	14	1,235	41
Total	432	100	2,950	100
College-Wide				
0 - 14	6,171	60	10,276	26
15 - 29	2,000	20	6,673	17
30 - 44	860	8	6,526	17
45 - 59	472	5	5,111	13
Over 60	710	7	10,344	27
Total	10,213	100	38,930	100

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